

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Cancelled).
2. (Cancelled).
3. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales method according to claim ~~4~~ 23, wherein ~~the point information is presented~~ the point information presentation means presents the point information by displaying the point information on a display unit in the vending machine.
4. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales method according to claim ~~4~~ 23, wherein ~~the point information is presented~~ the point information presentation means presents the point information by printing the point information from a printer provided in the vending machine onto prescribed paper.
5. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales method according to claim ~~4~~ 23, wherein ~~the point information is presented~~ the point information presentation means presents the point information by transmitting the point information to ~~communication equipment of a portable telephone set carried by the user through short-distance communication between the vending machine the portable telephone set and communication equipment~~ communication means provided in the vending machine.
6. (Cancelled).
7. (Cancelled).
8. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales method according to claim ~~2~~ 23, wherein ~~the secret code includes at least~~ the secret information comprises a secret code including a point issue number, and the center unit determines whether or not the point information has been used twice based on the point issue number included in the secret code.
9. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales method according to claim ~~2~~ 23, wherein ~~the module code comprises code information~~ the identification information to identify the vending machine comprises a module code to identify the vending machine, and the center unit manages the a status of the vending machine based on the module code.

10. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales method according to claim ~~4~~ 23, wherein the center unit manages a usage status by the user based on the identification information for the user together with the point information sent by the user.

11. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales method according to claim ~~4~~ 23, wherein, upon a request by the user, the center unit allows perusal ~~by the user of point stored~~ of the points accumulated and managed for the user in the point management means.

12. (Cancelled).

13. (Cancelled).

14. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales system according to claim ~~42~~ 25, wherein the point information presentation means ~~presents the point information to the user by~~ includes display control means for displaying the point information on a display unit provided in the vending machine.

15. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales system according to claim ~~42~~ 25, wherein the point information presentation means ~~presents the point information to the user by~~ includes printing control means for printing the point information on a prescribed paper ~~using printing means by a printer~~ provided in the vending machine.

16. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales system according to claim ~~42~~ 25, wherein the point information presentation means ~~presents the point information to the user by~~ includes communication control means for transmitting the point information to ~~communication equipment~~ a portable telephone set of the user ~~by~~ through short-distance communication between the vending machine and the communication equipment ~~the portable telephone set~~.

17. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales system according to claim ~~42~~ 25, wherein the point information presentation means ~~presents the point information to the user by selling~~ includes dummy product transporting control means for transporting a dummy product to which a printed material ~~on~~ onto which the point information has been printed is previously attached.

18. (Cancelled).

19. (Cancelled).

20. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales system according to claim ~~13~~ 25, wherein the identification information to identify the vending machine comprises a module code to identify the vending machine, and the center unit is provided with an equipment database that stores and manages a status of the vending machine ~~in correspondence with~~ corresponding to the module code.

21. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales system according to claim ~~12~~ 25, wherein the center unit is provided with a user database that stores and manages ~~the~~ a usage status of the digital contents sales system by the user in correspondence with the identification information for the user together with the point information sent by the user.

22. (Currently Amended) The digital contents sales system according to claim ~~12~~ 25, wherein the center unit is provided with perusal means that, upon a request from the user, allows the user to peruse the ~~point~~ points accumulated and managed for ~~that~~ the user in the point management means.

23. (New) A digital contents sales method, wherein:

a vending machine that sells a product is provided with point information presentation means for presenting to a user point information including an encrypted secret information related to points corresponding to an inserted amount of money and identification information to identify the vending machine, based on the insertion of a prescribed amount of money to the vending machine;

the point information presented by the point information presentation means is sent to a center unit with the identification information of the user by using a communication terminal of the user,

the center unit decrypts the point information sent by the communication terminal of the user;

the points included in the decrypted point information are accumulated and managed for the user in point management means; and

digital contents corresponding to the points accumulated and managed by the point management means are distributed to the communication terminal of the user upon a request from the user.

24. (New) The digital contents sales method according to claim 23, wherein the point information presentation means presents the point information by transporting a dummy product to which a printed material onto which the point information has been printed is previously attached from the vending machine.

25. (New) A digital contents sales system, comprising:
point information presentation means, provided in a vending machine that sells a product, for presenting to a user point information including an encrypted secret information related to points corresponding to an inserted amount of money and identification information to identify the vending machine, based on the insertion of a prescribed amount of money to the vending machine;

communication means for sending the point information presented by the point information presentation means together with the identification information for the user to a center unit by a communication terminal of the user;

point management means provided in the center unit, for decrypting the point information sent by the communication means, and accumulating and managing the points included in the point information for the user;

digital contents distribution means for, upon a request by the user, distributing the digital contents to the communication terminal of the user corresponding to the points accumulated and managed for the user in the point management means.

26. (New) The digital contents sales system according to claim 25, wherein the secret information comprises a secret code including a point issue number, and the center unit comprises duplicate use determination means for determining whether or not the point information has been used twice based on the point issue number included in the secret code.